

## 12.320 INVESTIGATION OF CON GAME/PIGEON DROP - SIGNAL 100

### **Reference:**

Standards Manual - 42.2.1, 42.2.2, 42.2.3

### **Information:**

Bank and financial institution personnel are trained to identify potential victims of con games as they are withdrawing large sums of money from their accounts. Bank tellers or managers will attempt to stall the potential victim and notify Police Communications Section.

### **Purpose:**

Reduce criminal victimization of the elderly and increase arrests in pigeon drop/con game offenses.

### **Procedure:**

A. Police Communications Section personnel will:

1. Keep the phone line open with the bank employee, if possible, to obtain additional descriptions and any pertinent information.
2. Dispatch a plainclothes unit from a district investigative unit via a Signal 100.
  - a. If no plainclothes cars are available, notify the district supervisor and call the Criminal Investigation Section desk to request a Property Crimes Unit car, or any other available plainclothes officer.
  - b. Do not send a uniformed officer except in the absence of any of the above plainclothes officers.

B. Preliminary Investigation:

1. The responding officer will:
  - a. Note the description of the subjects; on foot or in a vehicle outside the bank, who might be observing the victim or watching for the arrival of the police.

- b. Discreetly contact the bank representative who made the call and obtain any pertinent information.
  - c. Conduct a thorough preliminary investigation and attempt to apprehend the suspect(s) if it is determined that a crime is occurring or has occurred.
  - d. Contact the potential victim immediately or on a delayed basis, depending on the situation, location of suspects, etc.
    - 1) Very often the victim will be instructed by the suspect to deliver the money at a prearranged location. Allowing the victim to make delivery of a dummy money packet to the suspect is one method aiding apprehension. This should not be done without the consent of the victim. Safety of the victim will be the primary concern.
  - e. When it is determined an offense has occurred, complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
2. The collator in the district of occurrence will forward a copy of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report to the Property Crimes Unit.

C. Property Crimes Unit Responsibilities:

- 1. Maintain a suspect-photo book and an offense MO book to aid district investigators.
- 2. Maintain liaison with con game/pigeon drop investigators from major cities around the country. Contact with these people can be very helpful to the investigator because of the highly transient nature of con game/pigeon drop offenders.
- 3. Begin an all-terminal teletype, including the name and description of the offenders, and a brief outline of the MO used.
- 4. Assist with case preparation and attempt to determine if similar crimes have occurred in other cities in surrounding areas.
- 5. Keep district investigative units apprised of city-wide trends in this area.

D. Follow-up Investigation:

1. Districts will retain responsibility for the follow-up investigation of these cases.
2. When an arrest is made, the collator in the district of arrest will send a copy of the Arrest and Investigation Report (Form 527) to the Property Crimes Unit.
3. If no arrest has been made, the investigating officer will notify the Public Information Office, who will contact the news media with the description and MO of the perpetrators. Con men are very sensitive to publicity and generally leave when they realize the public is aware of their presence.

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